MP3, CD, cassette, 8-track, LP. Have you struggled with the technological obsolescence of your music collection? Imagine, then, trying to play this wax disc recording from 1885. A team from the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, in conjunction with the Smithsonian Institution and the Library of Congress, managed to do just that. By scanning the surface of the disc and then digitally reconstructing the sound waves, they recovered the only confirmed recording of Alexander Graham Bell. What did he say? “Hear my voice.” Thanks to technology, we can do so again.

For more on Bell and the technology of audio restoration, see https://spectrum.ieee.org/pastforward0518.